

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-15, and 17-20 are now pending in this Application. The Office Action dated May 5, 2004 rejected Claims 1-4, and 9-15, and objected to Claims 1, 5-8, 10 and 16-20. In response, Applicants have cancelled Claim 5 and 16, and Applicants have amended Claim 1, 6-7, 9-10, and 17-20 to further clarify the patentable matter of the claimed invention. Applicants submit that the pending claims are patentable for the reasons discussed below:

Objections

The objections in Paragraph 2 of the Office Action were typographical errors that have been corrected in the amendments. The Applicants appreciate the examiner indicating these errors.

Paragraph 8 of the Office Action objected to Claims 5-8, and 16-20 for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but they would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim, and any intervening claims, from which they depend.

In response, the Applicant has amended Claim 1 to include all of the limitations of Claim 5. Claim 5 has been canceled. Also, the dependencies of Claims 6-7 have been amended to depend from amended independent Claim 1. Claim 10 has been amended to include all of the limitations of Claim 16. Claim 16 has been canceled. Additionally, the dependencies of Claims 17-20 have been amended to depend from the amended independent Claim 10. Therefore, based at least upon these amendments Claims 1-8, and 10-20 are now in condition for allowance.

Paragraph 1 of the Office Action objected to the specification for failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter of Claim 15. Applicants have amended the specification to include a paragraph that restates the subject matter of Claim 15. No new subject matter has been added.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 of Claims 1-4, 10-14

The Office Action has rejected Claims 1-3, 10-14, as obvious in view of referenced prior art Kim et al, (US 6,603,360) in view of Hunt, Jr. et al (US 6,385,276). The Office Action has also rejected Claim 4 as obvious in view of Kim et al, in view of Hunt, Jr., and further in view of Keating (US 5,867,068).

The Applicants respectfully disagree that the referenced prior art makes the rejected claims 1-4, and 10-14 obvious. However, in view of the amendments to the independent Claims 1, 9, and 10 these rejections are moot.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 of Claim 9

The Office Action has rejected Claim 9, as obvious in view of referenced prior art Kim et al, (US 6,603,360) in view of Hunt, Jr. et al (US 6,385,276).

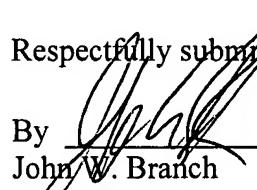
In response, the Applicants have amended Claim 9 to include the elements in Claim 5 that were objected to. Claim 9 was rejected for similar reasons as claims 1 and 10 so this amendment should accordingly bring Claim 9 into allowance. Therefore, amended Claim 9 is now in condition for allowance.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Dated: July 15, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By

 John W. Branch

Registration No.: 41,633
DARBY & DARBY P.C.
P.O. Box 5257
New York, New York 10150-5257
(206) 262-8900
(212) 753-6237 (Fax)
Attorneys/Agents For Applicant